

T H E U R B A N D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L
O F
H O U G H T O N - l e - S P R I N G .

Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health.
(Dr. W. Barkes.)
for the year ending 31st., DECEMBER, 1920.

To the Urban District Council of Houghton, ~~Le~~ ~~Spings~~.

Mr Chairman & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit for your consideration my Annual Report dealing with the health and sanitary conditions of your district for the year 1920. For a thickly populated and overcrowded mining area, the various returns compare very favourably with the rest of the country. The birth rate is the highest since 1909 and the general death rate with the exception of 1917, is lower than it has been for 10 years. It is particularly gratifying to record that the Infantile Mortality rate is, with one exception, the lowest on record for the district, a fact which is all the more remarkable considering the overcrowded conditions of the area. As an index of the improved sanitary conditions of the district, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Typhoid Fever has been practically absent during the last four years. In conclusion I wish to acknowledge the help extended to me by the other officials of the Council.

I am, Mr Chairman & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. BARKES.

National and Social Conditions of the District.

Our population taken at the last census in 1911 totalled 9,753 and the estimated population in the middle of the year under review is 10,047. The distinction between "birth-rate population" and "death-rate population", made during the period when a large part of the male population was under arms has been discontinued as far as this district is concerned.

We are almost entirely a coal-mining community, for the factories and workshops in the area are only small and unimportant.

The area of the district extends to 1,551 acres, the surface being drained naturally by means of two burns which have their fall in a south-westerly direction. In the north the district is hilly with points 500 feet above sea-level, but this level gradually falls towards the south-western boundary where the land lies roughly about 200 feet above the sea.

Vital Statistics. The total deaths for the year numbered 136, and

Deaths. of these 78 were males and 58 females, which gives a rate on a population of 10,047 of 13.53 per thousand per annum..

Table 1. shows the causes of death and the number under each disease with distinction of sex.

Compared with 1919 there have been 30 fewer deaths amongst all ages and this in part can be accounted for by the fact that there was no severe epidemic of Influenza during 1920.

Diseases of the lungs caused 36 deaths and as was stated last year our changeable climate is in a good

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN SENATE

January 1, 1900

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE

PASSED MAY 1, 1899

RELATIVE TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE UNITED STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

IN FULLY WITH THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

AND TO THE LANDS BELONGING TO THE SEVERAL STATES

Vital Statistics continued.

Deaths. measure responsible for this.

There were 10 deaths of children under 2 years of age from Diarrhoea —this is lamentable, and can be attributed partly to the poor accommodation for storing food in most of houses where the deaths occurred, for the class of house in 8 of the cases was old and defective and partly to the habit of leaving food exposed in the houses to flies etc.

Food, whether it be milk or anything else, is seldom contaminated when brought to the home, but the latter process takes place in the houses.

There were 9 deaths from tuberculosis of the lungs compared with 10 last year. Influenza caused 5 deaths a decrease of 27 on last year.

Infant Deaths. The deaths amongst infants under 1 year of age totalled 36. An increase of 2 on last year, of these 22 were males and 14 females and all the above were legitimate children with the exception of 2 females. The Infantile Mortality rate was 97.2 per thousand births. Table 2 shows the net deaths from stated causes at various ages below one year.

Births. The total number of births registered during the year was 370 and of these 182 were males and 188 females.

Births continued.

The above total includes 20 illegitimate births.

The birth-rate worked out at 36.8 per thousand per annum the highest rate charted for some years.

Table 3 shows the vital statistics for the district for the last five years.

Table 4 is a summary of vital statistics for England and Wales and for groups of towns and to this I have added the corresponding figures for the Urban District of Houghton-le-Spring..

The above is a list of the names of the persons who have been

admitted to the membership of the Association since the last

meeting of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

office of the Association, and who have been elected to the

Causes of death in Houghton-le-Spring Urban District in 1920

Causes of Death (Civilians only).		Male.	Female.
All.causes.		78	58
1. Enteric Fever			
2. Small-pox			
3. Measles.			1
4. Scarlet-Fever			
5. Whooping Cough			
6. Diphtheria and croup		1	2
7. Influenza		3	2
8. Erysipelas			
9. Pulmonary Tuberculosis		5	4
10. Tuberculous Meningitis		1	
11. Other tuberculous diseases		2	
12. Cancer, Malignant disease		8	5
13. Rheumatic fever			
14. Meningitis		1	
15. Organic heart disease		4	5
16. Bronchitis		7	7
17. Pneumonia (all forms)		3	7
18. Other respiratory diseases		1	2
19. Diarrhoea etc. (under 2 years)		6	4
20. Appendicitis and Typhitis			
21. Cirrhosis of liver			
21A. Alcoholism		1	
22. Nephritis and Bright's disease		2	1
23. Puerperal fever			2
24. Parturition apart from puerperal fever			
25. Congenital debility etc.		5	5
26. Violence apart from suicide		3	1
27. Suicide			
28. Other defined diseases		25	10
29. Causes ill-defined or unknown			
Special causes (included above)			
Cerebro-spinal fever			
Poliomyelitis			

TABLE II.

Infant Mortality.

CAUSES OF DEATH,	Under 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks	Total under 4 weeks	4 weeks and under 3 months	3 months and under 6 months	6 months and under 9 months	9 months and under 12 months	Total deaths under 1 year
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chicken-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Scarlet-fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuberculosis Meningitis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Abdominal Tuberculosis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Tuberculosis Diseases ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Meningitis (not Tuberculosis) ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Convulsions ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	1	4
Laryngitis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bronchitis ... ..	...	1	1	...	2	1	...	...	2	5
Pneumonia (all forms) ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	3
Diarrhœa ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Enteritis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	1	5
Gastritis ... ..	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Syphilis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rickets ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Suffocation, overlaying ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Injury at Birth	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Atelectosis ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Congenital Malformations	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	3
Premature Birth	3	...	...	1	4	...	1	...	...	5
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	1	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	3
Other Causes... ..	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	2
TOTALS	7	2	1	2	12	5	6	7	6	36

Page 7.

Table 3.

Table of Vital Statistics for the last five years.

Year.	Births.			Deaths (all ages.)			Infant Mortality.		
	Number		Rate	Number		Rate	Number		Rate
	M	F		M	F		M	F	
1916	111	115	23.7	71	68	15.9	10	14	106.1
1917	102	107	21.9	54	61	13.4	12	8	95.8
1918	135	125	26.9	82	82	19.1	14	12	100.0
1919	168	141	30.2	86	80	17.18	21	13	111.8
1920	182	188	26.8	78	58	13.53	22	14	87.2

TABLE IV.

Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality during the Year 1920.

(Provisional figures. Provisional populations estimated to the middle of 1920 have been used for the purposes of this Table.
The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns.)

	BIRTH-RATE PER 1000 TOTAL POPULATION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION.								RATE PER 1,000 BIRTHS.		PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEATHS.				
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under 2 years).	Total Deaths under One Year.	Deaths in Public Institutions.	Certified Causes.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales ...	25.4	12.4	0.01	0.00	0.19	0.04	0.11	0.15	0.28	0.48	8.3	80	24.3	92.2	6.6	1.2
96 Great Towns, including London (Census Populations exceeding 50,000).	26.2	12.5	0.01	0.00	0.22	0.04	0.14	0.16	0.31	0.43	10.4	85	31.3	92.2	7.1	0.7
148 Smaller Towns (Census Populations 20,000—50,000).	24.9	11.3	0.02	0.00	0.19	0.03	0.10	0.14	0.27	0.38	7.8	80	16.5	93.2	5.3	1.5
London ...	26.5	12.4	0.01	0.00	0.22	0.05	0.17	0.22	0.30	0.47	9.5	75	46.8	91.2	8.6	0.2
Houghton-le-Spring Urban District ...	36.82	13.53	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.49	0.39	23.7	97	21.8	92.7	6.0	1.3

Prevalence and control of Infectious Diseases. By referring to Table 5 it will be seen there were 97 cases of infectious diseases notified during the year and by far the larger number of these were cases of pneumonia. The number of cases treated in the isolation hospital was 20 and of these 11 were cases of scarlet fever and 9 of Diphtheria and there were 2 deaths in the institution..

Scarlet Fever. There were 27 cases during the year and these were confined to no particular district. The type of the disease was mild and there were no deaths and no return cases.

Diphtheria. There were 13 cases of this disease notified and most of them were of a severe type. Anti-diphtheritic serum was supplied free for all the cases except one. There were 3 deaths.

Enteric Fever. Only one case occurred during the year.. There has been a remarkable drop in the number of cases of this disease, whereas in the year 1914, there were 22 cases in this District, the yearly total has continued to drop ever since and during the last four years there have only been 4 cases altogether.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum. There was only one case notified to be suffering from this disease and this good result can be almost entirely attributed to the better knowledge of the general public of methods of preventing this trouble.

Influenza. During the early part of the year this disease again made its appearance and threatened to become epidemic, but the resistance of the population owing to better conditions of living was of a higher standard and the disease assumed a much milder character than in the previous year..

TABLE V.
Infectious Diseases Notified during the year.

DISEASE.	Total Number Notified.	Notified First Quarter.	Notified Second Quarter.	Notified Third Quarter.	Notified Fourth Quarter.	Number treated in Isolation Hospital.
Erysipelas	12	2	5	3	2	—
Pneumonia	40	12	16	8	4	—
Ophthalmic Neonatorum	1	—	—	—	1	—
Scarlet Fever	27	5	1	10	11	11
Diphtheria	13	5	1	3	4	9
Enteric Fever	1	—	1	—	—	—
Malaria	3	—	2	1	—	—
Total	97	24	26	25	22	20

During the year there were 17 new cases of tuberculosis of the lungs notified and 12 new cases of tuberculosis, of other organs of the body. There were 8 persons belonging to this district admitted to Sanatoria under the County Scheme and 7 were discharged. Various hospitals gave treatment to 8 other persons for tuberculosis of a non-pulmonary type and 7 were discharged.

Venereal Diseases.

The County Council, is the local authority for the administration of the Venereal Diseases Act, 1917 and has established various clinics throughout the county for the treatment of persons suffering from such. A local committee was formed in 1919 to promote propaganda work in conjunction with the County Council.

Small-Pox.

No cases of this disease occurred during the year and no re-vaccinations were performed by me under the Public Health (Small-Pox Prevention) Regulations 1917.

Hospital Accommodation.

There is a con-joint small-pox hospital for the use of the whole union, fortunately the district has been free from this disease for a number of years.

The isolation hospital for other diseases of an infectious nature comprises four wards with eleven beds and is sufficiently equipped for the needs of the district. Several improvements have been carried out during the year, the old ash-closets have been replaced by water closets and a new disinfecting house has been built and fully equipped with an up-to-date steam disinfecter. The telephone has also been installed. One of the wards is detached from the main building and is kept for typhoid cases.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District..

Water. The main supply for the area comes out of Houghton Colliery and is pumped from there to the reservoirs on Miller's Hill and an additional supply can be drawn from the Sunderland & South Shields Water Company to make up any shortage when the necessity arises. The water is extremely hard, being drawn from the limestone and while suitable for drinking purposes it is very costly in the use of soap for washing.

Scavenging..

This is entirely done by the Council's own workmen under the direction of the Surveyor and the refuse is deposited on selected sites of waste ground. At some future date, I hope to see this refuse rendered harmless by the adoption of the destructor furnace method of disposal; this method was considered by the Council when last they were under the necessity of selecting a new tipping site for house refuse, and details were gone into, but the scheme had to be given up as the cost was prohibitive.

Sewage Disposal.

Purification is carried out at the Sewage Farm at Flint Mill by the intermittent downward filtration method. The number of water closets has increased during the year by 40 conversions from ash-pit privies.

Factories & Workshops..

These have been inspected at intervals during the year as to cleanliness, ventilation, overcrowding and drainage of floors etc., and as to sanitary accommodation. There were no defects to be reported, either under the Factory and Workshops Acts or under the Public Health Acts.

Common Lodging Houses. There were three houses of this description in the district, but towards the end of the year a closing order was served on the owner of the Lodging House in Grey Horse Lane by order of the Council.

These places are regularly inspected by the Inspector of Nuisances as to cleanliness and overcrowding. Three informal notices were served during the year and all nuisances were abated after the notices had been served.

Slaughter Houses. Inspections at intervals were carried out and one informal notice was given of a nuisance with the desired effect.

Offensive Trades. The premises in which such trades are carried on were found at each inspection clean and well kept in accordance with the requirements of the model bye-laws.

Dairies & Cowsheds. The Inspector of Nuisances pays regular visits to the dairies and cowsheds in the area and supervises the carrying out of the bye-laws.

A Summary of work done in the Inspector, of Nuisances department during the year is appended.

Housing. There were no new houses erected in the district during the year, so that my remarks applying to the year 1919 hold good.

However by next year many of the new houses on the Hetton Road Site will be occupied as there are four nearing completion. There have been many repairs to existing property carried out during the year, but there is still serious overcrowding, which cannot be overcome until the new houses are up.

Houghton-le-Spring Urban District.

SUMMARY of work done in the Inspector of Nuisances' Department during the year 1920.

1.—PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.					GENERAL REMARKS.
Dwelling-houses and Schools.	Foul Conditions	Structural Defects	Overcrowding		
Lodging-houses	1	...
Dairies and Milkshops	35	10 Work in hand.
Cowsheds	13	2
Bakehouses	3	3
Slaughter-houses
Ashpits and Privies
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	1	1 Closing Order Served.
Waterclosets	9	...
Defective Yard Paving	6	...
House Drainage	Defective Traps	No Disconnection from Sewers	Other Faults	48	...
Water Supply	2	...
Pigsties	1	...
Animals Improperly Kept
Offensive Trades	47	...
Smoke Nuisances	97	...
Other Nuisances	4	...
TOTALS	271	267

II.—WATER, FOOD, AND DRUGS.

Samples of Water taken for Analysis	...	...	...
" " condemned as unfit for use	...	...	...
Seizures of Unwholesome Food	...	...	3
Convictions for exposing or selling Unwholesome Food	...	...	...
Samples of Food and Drugs taken for Analysis	...	...	...
" " found Adulterated	...	...	...

(21 bags of yeast.
Carcase of Beef (Tuberculosis).
Decomposing frozen beef (312 lbs).

III.—PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Lots of Infectious Bedding stoved or destroyed	20
Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease...	20
Schools " "	...
Prosecutions for exposure of infected persons or things	...
Convictions for " " "	...

IV.—GENERAL.

Number of New Houses erected during the year	...
Number of such Houses occupied during the year...	...
Ashpit-privies converted into Ash-closets	...
" " " Water-closets	40
Ash-closets " " "	...
Total number of Water-closets in District	554
" Ash-closets	1024
" Ash-pit privies	391

S. W. WARWICK, Inspector of Nuisances.

